

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 ANKARA 03365 031206Z

53

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-07 NSC-07 SP-03 SS-20 RSC-01 L-03

MC-02 AID-20 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 ACDA-19 EB-11

OMB-01 TRSE-00 DRC-01 /131 W
----- 020316

R 031033Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3920

INFO USMISSION NATO

USCINCEUR

EUCOM

CINCUSAFE

CSAF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 3365

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, EIND, TU

SUBJ: FIGHTER AIRCRAFT CO-PRODUCTION

REF A) ANKARA 2375, B) ANKARA 1743

LZ1. SUMMARY: IN APRIL 30 NEWSPAPER INTERVIEW, DEFENSE MINISTER ISIK SAID TURKISH FIGHTER AIRCRAFT CO-PRODUCTION SCHEME HAD BEEN SHELVED BY GOT AT LEAST FOR TIME BEING. AIR FORCE FOUNDATION TELLS US FINAL DECISION NOT YET MADE. END SUMMARY.

2. ON TUESDAY, APRIL 30, IZMIR DAILY "YENI ASIR" PUBLISHED INTERVIEW BY ITS ANKARA CORRESPONDENT WITH DEFENSE MINISTER ISIK ON SUBJECT OF ESTABLISHMENTTURKISH MILITARY AVIATION INDUSTRY. ACCORDING TO "YENI ASIR", ISIK SAID FIGHTER AIRCRAFT PRODUCTION HAD TO BE CONSIDERED WITHIN CONTEXT OF DEFENSE INDUSTRY AS WHOLE. TO TREAT IT SEPARATELY WOULD "CAUSE GREAT FINANCIAL BURDENS." ISIK IS QUOTED AS SAYING TALKS WITH COMPETING FOREIGN COMPANIES HAD BEEN BROKEN OFF. STORY GOES ON TO REHEARSE HISTORY OF PROJECT, PUTTING TOTAL COST OF 200 TURKISH-PRODUCED FIGHTER AIRCRAFT AT TL 8 TO 13 BILLION MINIMUM. STORY CONCLUDES THAT ECEVIT GOVT HAS DECIDED PROJECT FACED MAJOR ECONOMIC
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 ANKARA 03365 031206Z

DIFFICULTIES, AND THAT IT HAD BEEN "DROPPED FOR TIME BEING."

2. IN DISCUSSION WITH EMBOFF, "YENI ASIR" CORRESPONDENT WHO INTERVIEWED ISIK SEEMED CONVINCED THAT ISIK WAS GIVING HIM OFFICIAL GOVT POSITION ON PROJECT.

3. WE DISCUSSED "YENI ASIR" ARTICLE WITH RETIRED TURKISH AIR FORCE MAJOR GENERAL SIRRI KORCUM, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF TURKISH AIR FORCE FOUNDATION, WHICH IS BEHIND PROJECT. WHILE CLAIMING HE HAD NOT SEEN "YENI ASIR" STORY, KORCUM GAVE US FOLLOWING BACK-GROUND. SHORTLY AFTER INSTALLATION OF NEW COALITION GOVT, FOUNDATION HAD BRIEFED FIGHTER AIRCRAFT PRODUCTION PROPOSAL TO DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER NECMETTIN ERBAKAN IN HIS CAPACITY AS CHAIRMAN OF INTER-MINISTERIAL ECONOMIC COUNCIL. ERBAKAN HAD RDEPONDED FAVORABLY, INDICATING THAT HE WOULD SUPPORT IT. BUT THERE WERE DIFFERENCES WITHIN COALITION ON THAT PORTION OF GOVT PROGRAM INVOLVING SUPPORT FOR DEVELOPMENT IN TURKEY OF DEFENSE INDUSTRIES. SINCE GOVT PROGRAM WASIMPRECISE GENERAL STATEMENT, QUESTION OF DEFINING IT MORE PRECISELY AROSE, AND THIS WAS BEING DONE THROUGH A DIALECTICAL PROCESS INVOLVING MINISTERS FROM BOTH COALITION PARTIES. (KORCUM HINTED BUT DID NOT ACTUALLY SAY THAT RPP WAS COOL TOWARD FIGHTER AIRCRAFT PROJECT.) IN EFFECT, DEFENSE MINISTER ISIK, IN "YENI ASIR", INTERVIEW WAS REPEATING BZMFCQBVEOWION HE HAD TAKEN SEVERAL WEEKS AGO (REF B), WHICH WAS ALSO POSITION HE WAS TAKING WITHIN GOVT AS CONSIDERATION OF WHOLE QUESTION OF ESTABLISHMENT AND DEVELOPMENT DEFENSE INDUSTRIAL CAPABILITY WENT FORWARD. HIS COMMENTS, THEREFORE, SHOULD BE TREATED AS ONE OF SEVERAL VIEWS, RATHER THAN AS APAF ##

OF OTHER

MINISTRIES ALSO WOULD HAVE BEARING ON EVENTUAL OUTCOME.

4. KORCUM STRESSED THAT IN CONSIDERING HOW TO IMPLEMENT THAT PORTION OF ITS PROGRAM CALLING FOR DEVELOPMENT OF DEFENSE INDUSTRIES, GOVT HAD TO CONSIDER FINANCIAL, TECHNOLOGICAL AND ANTIONAL SECURITY FACTORS. IT MIGHT BE CNSLUDED THAT CERTAIN TYPES OF WEAPONSEYSTEMS, ALL THINGS CONSIDERED, SHOULD BE PURCHASED ABROAD WHILE OTHERS SHOULD BE MADE IN TURKEY. PRIORITIES WOULD HAVE TO BE ASSIGNED. FINAL DECISIONS IN THIS RESPECT HAD NOT YET BEEN MADE. KORCUM WAS CAUTIOUS IN ASSESSING PROSPECTS FOR FIGHTER AIRCRAFT SCHEME. FOR FIRST TIME TO OUR KNOWLEDGE, HOWEVER, HE CONCEDED THAT AIR FORCE CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 ANKARA 03365 031206Z

FOUNDATION HAD CONTINGENCY PLAN FOR EVENT THAT FIGHTER PRODUCTION FAILED TO WIN GOVT APPROVAL. FOUNDATION'S ASSETS WOULD IN THAT CASE BE APPLIED TO OTHER PROJECTS TO BENEFIT TURKISH AIR FORCE, POSSIBLY INCLUDING PRODUCTION OF LIGHT AIRCRAFT.

5. COMMENT: KORCUM'S MANNER THROUGHOUT CONVERSATION SUGGESTED FAIR DEGREE OF DISCOURAGEMENT. AT ONE POINT, HE VENTURED THOUGHT THAT NATIONAL DEFENSE MERITS OF FIGHTER AIRCRAFT CO-PRODUCTION

SCHEME WERE UNDENIABLE, AND THAT ONLY DOMESTIC POLITICS INTERFERED.
HE AGREED WITH OUR CHARACTERIZATION OF HIS ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT
STATUS AS "FLUID," OR "COULD GO EITHER WAY." THIS STRIKES
US AS SIGNIFICANTLY PESSIMISTIC, COMING FROM A MAN WHO IN PAST
HAS NEVER SHOWN ANYTHING BUT MOST COMPLETE CONFIDENCE IN FUTURE
OF FIGHTER AIRCRAFT CO-PRODUCTION PROPOSAL. WE THINK LATEST
ISIK STATEMENT MEANS PROSPECTS FOR PROPOSAL ARE AT THIS STAGE
QUITE DIM.
MACOMBER

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FIGHTER AIRCRAFT, AEROSPACE INDUSTRY, AIRCRAFT SALES, AIR FORCE, PRESS CONFERENCES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 MAY 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: garlanwa
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974ANKARA03365
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740106-0917
From: ANKARA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740578/aaaacrob.tel
Line Count: 124
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: A) ANKARA 2375, B) ANKARA 1743
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: garlanwa
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 AUG 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <27 AUG 2002 by elyme>; APPROVED <13 JAN 2003 by garlanwa>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FIGHTER AIRCRAFT CO-PRODUCTION
TAGS: MASS, EIND, TU, (ISIK, HASAN)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005